



US 8 - WIS 35 (N) to US 53 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Newsletter

Transportation District 8 January 2003 Newsletter Number 3

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Contact Information:

Dena Grumdahl
WisDOT-District 8
1701 North 4th Street
Superior, WI 54880
715/ 395-3030
dena.grumdahl@dot.state.wi.us

Joan Petersen, P.E.
Strand Associates, Inc.
910 West Wingra Drive
Madison, WI 53715
608/251-4843
866/300-5446 (toll free)
joan.petersen@strand.com

If you have any questions or concerns about this project, contact any of the above representatives.

The US 8 corridor study is proceeding on schedule: midway through the study stage where alternatives (conceptual and refined) are developed. The study will result in a US 8 Environmental Impact Statement that will recommend how long term transportation needs of the 40-mile US 8 corridor should be met.

The study, which will conclude in 2004, began with a Transportation Needs Assessment during 2001-mid 2002. In this first study stage, input from the public, data collection, and analysis

were used to develop conceptual alternatives that address the needs identified from this preliminary input and additional participation from the public and local officials and governmental agencies. The study team will begin to refine those alternatives after hearing public comments from the informational meeting in February.

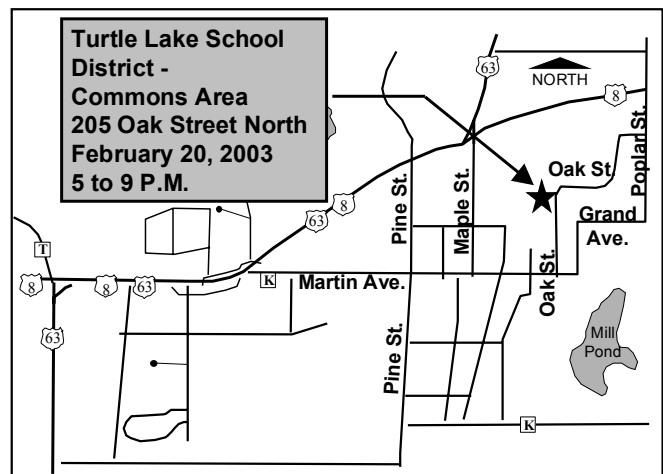


US 8 heading east in Poskin.

Please Mark Your Calendar - Public Informational Meeting on Feb. 20, 2003

A public information meeting will be held on Thursday, Feb. 20, 5 – 9 p.m., at the School District of Turtle Lake, 205 Oak Street North in Turtle Lake. The meeting will have an “open house” type format with citizens welcome anytime during the four-hour meeting time frame, and they may stay as long as they wish. A brief project overview presentation will be given at

6:30 p.m. for those interested. This meeting gives the public an opportunity to



Public Meeting Location Map.

view and comment on the conceptual alternative solutions for US 8 that were developed to address specific transportation needs. Aerial maps for the entire 40-mile corridor will show the conceptual “footprint” of the corridor alternatives and potential changes to the local road system. Bypass

alternatives for Turtle Lake and Barron will be on view. Comments from the public about the alternatives will be exceedingly important to the course of the remaining US 8 study process. Concerns or issues voiced will help identify routes supported by the public.

Public Involvement Progress Report

During 2002, the study team of Strand Associates, SEH, and EMCS and WisDOT hosted a series of meetings that summarized the transportation needs assessment and helped develop conceptual alternatives to meet the needs.

In April 2002, the public was invited to the first informational meeting where focus group efforts, traffic projections, and corridor crash history were presented. Conceptual alternative solutions discussed included a four-lane expressway along the majority of the corridor, and bypasses of Turtle Lake and Barron.

In June, the public was invited to participate in Vision Workshops (see separate article in this newsletter) where options for US 8 bypasses of Turtle Lake and Barron were laid out by the workshop participants. Based on this input, the study team refined options and corridors.

In September 2002, the study team met with various government agency representatives and local officials to present these alternatives and obtain comment. An additional meeting with Barron and Turtle Lake officials was held in November to discuss local access and refine bypass corridor alternatives. The study team will bring the resultant maps to the informational meeting on Feb. 20, 2003.

2002	2002	2002	2002	*2003*
April	June	September	November	February
Public Informational Meeting #1	Public Vision Workshops	Government Agencies and Local Officials Meeting	Barron and Turtle Lake Local Officials Meeting	*Public Informational Meeting #2*

Public and Local Officials Meeting Record for 2002.

What Happens Next

What should area residents, businesses, and local officials within the US 8 corridor area expect from the study in the coming months?

- After study alternatives are presented to the public, citizens may have questions that come up after the public informational meeting where exhibits have been on view. To assist in answering questions and concerns, the public may choose to use any of the following contacts or sources to obtain additional information:

- Through the spring of 2003, the study team will have a local representative who will hold “office hours” and be available to meet with citizens, either one-on-one or in small groups, as can be arranged. The representative will have the same maps and exhibits showing alternatives that were at the public information meeting, to assist with addressing questions or concerns. Information on the local contact will be published shortly after the February meeting.

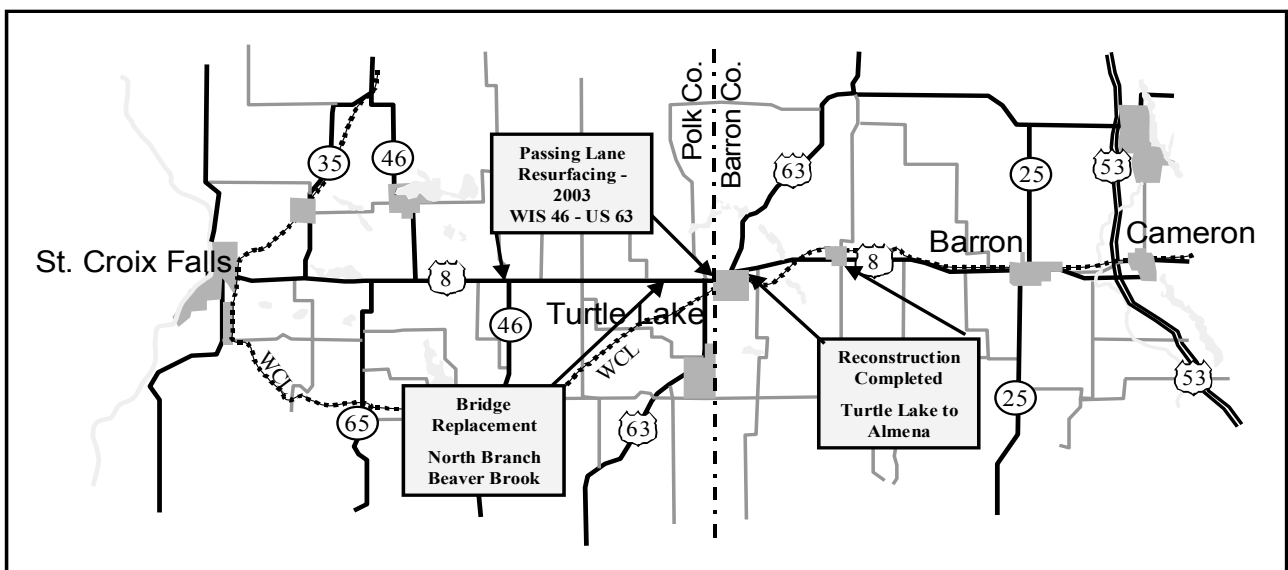
- Use the internet site at www.dot.wisconsin.gov/projects/d8/eis/index.htm for maps and informational meeting handouts and fact sheets.
- Call, write, or email your comments or questions to the project managers (see front page of this newsletter).
- During the spring and summer of 2003, the alternatives will be refined based on public comments, coordination with federal and state agencies will continue, and impacts of the various alternatives will be measured.
- The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) will be published in spring of 2004.
- Following a period when the DEIS is available for public review, a public hearing will be held mid-summer 2004.
- Once all the comments regarding the draft EIS have been properly addressed, the final version can be prepared. The Final EIS is expected by December 2004.

Update on Current US 8 Construction

The last newsletter covered how current construction projects on US 8 between WIS 46 and Almena address immediate safety needs and provide much needed improvements to the pavement driving surface. The projects completed by WisDOT last fall include Turtle Lake – Almena reconstruction project and the bridge replacement at North Branch Beaver Brook. The final surfacing for the WIS 46-US 63 Passing Lane reconstruction project will be completed in 2003. Two additional projects are planned for 2003 construction and they include re-surfacing US 8 in the Village of Turtle Lake (US 63-Poplar Street) and from Almena to Barron.



Passing lane construction on US 8 in September 2001.



Current construction projects located on US 8.

Vision Workshops Build Momentum for Conceptual Bypass Corridors

Vision Workshops were held on June 3, 2002 in Turtle Lake and on June 4 in Barron to gather ideas on transportation issues in these communities and inspiration from citizens familiar with the US 8 Corridor.

The study team gave a presentation to residents and business owners providing information on the study area and project background, why an EIS is being conducted, and what the EIS involves. Participants worked individually and in groups to define the most pressing transportation problems in the Turtle Lake and Barron areas. Concerns within both communities included pedestrian safety; congestion, especially at intersections; no bike facilities; and speeding. Vision Workshop participants brainstormed possible short and long term solutions to these problems.

Community members drew up some of their own ideas for through-town and bypass alternatives for Turtle Lake and Barron. These drawings laid the groundwork for conceptual bypass corridor routes. The insert in this newsletter displays citizens drawings from the workshops. Alternative alignments developed from these drawings are shown below the citizen drawn maps.



Residents, business owners, and other groups participated in the Vision Workshops.



Members of the communities drew ideas for bypass alternatives around Turtle Lake and Barron.

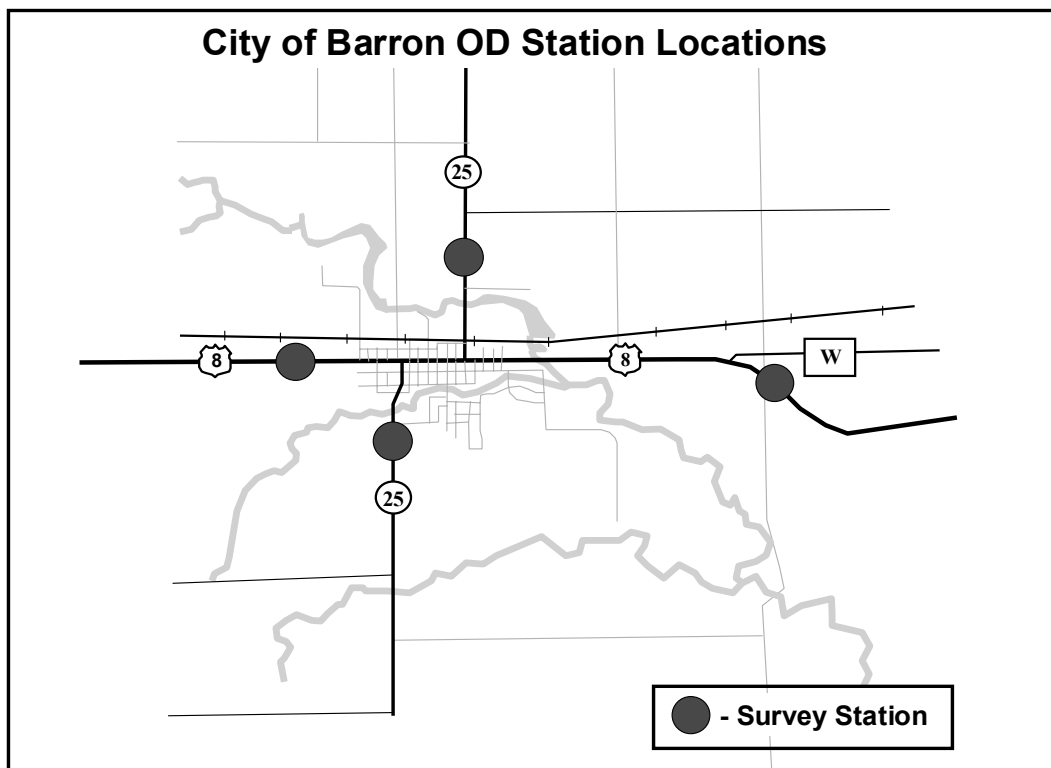
Origin - Destination Survey Results

During a few days in late July 2002, WisDOT conducted Origin – Destination (OD) surveys in Turtle Lake and Barron. The OD surveys had WisDOT staff man stations at key highway locations around the community. All vehicles entering or leaving a station location during the day were stopped and drivers asked about their trip. Motorists were asked where they were coming from, where they were headed, and the purpose of their trip.

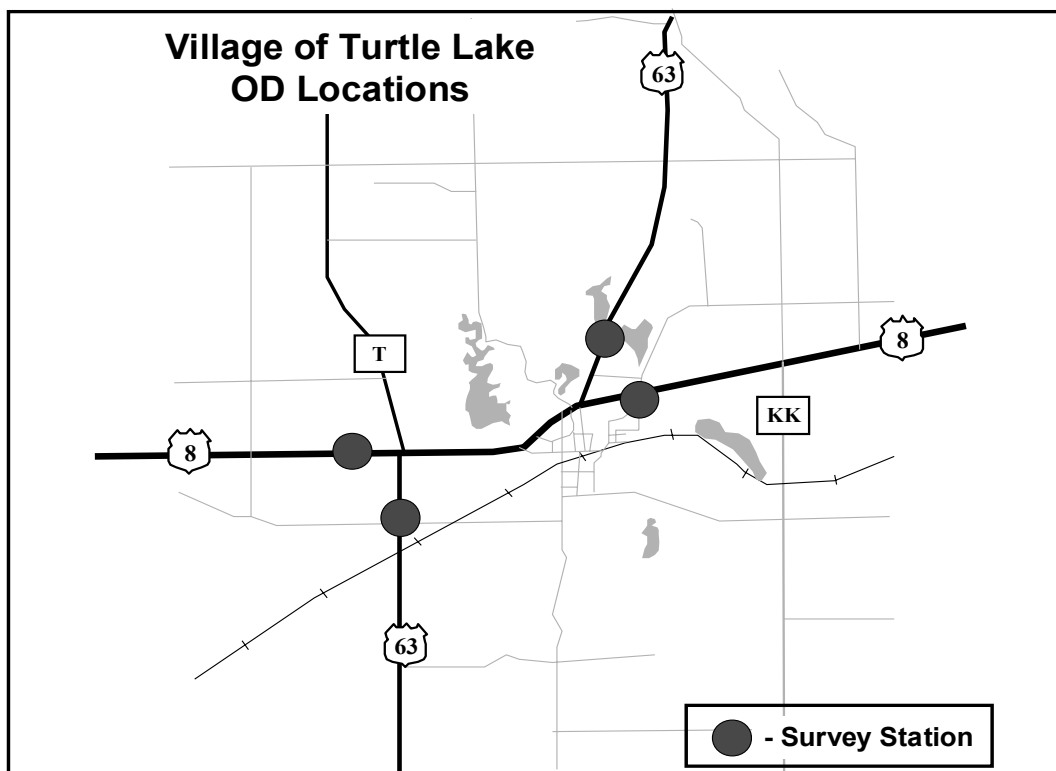
The Origin - Destination surveys will help WisDOT and the US 8 study team understand area travel patterns. This helps in estimating how much traffic

would use a north or south bypass, and what percentage of motorists are local. The percentage of local or regional-traveling trucks is also determined.

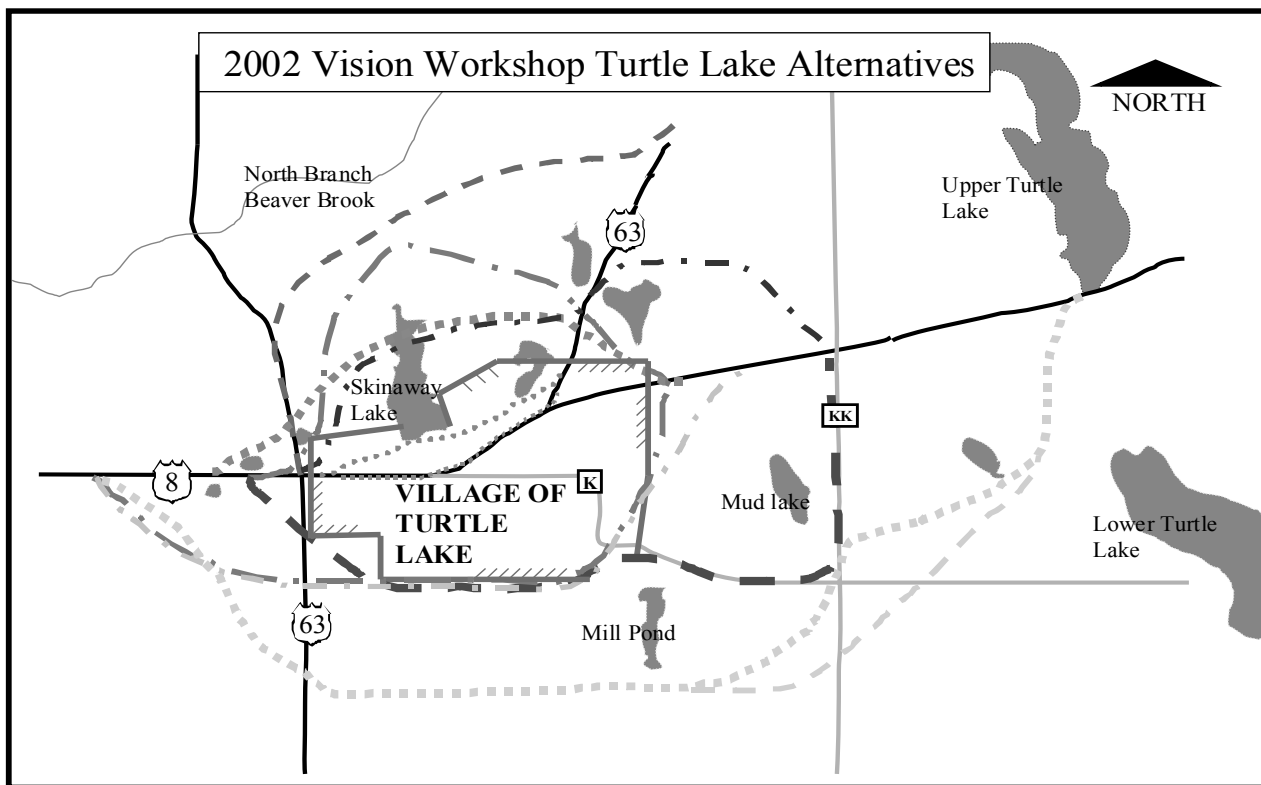
Results from the OD surveys were essentially the same for both Turtle Lake and Barron. It is estimated that about one third of the total traffic in each community would use a bypass. The remaining two thirds of total traffic would still continue into or through the community. In each community, about half of the total number of trucks would use the bypass, the other half would still come through town.



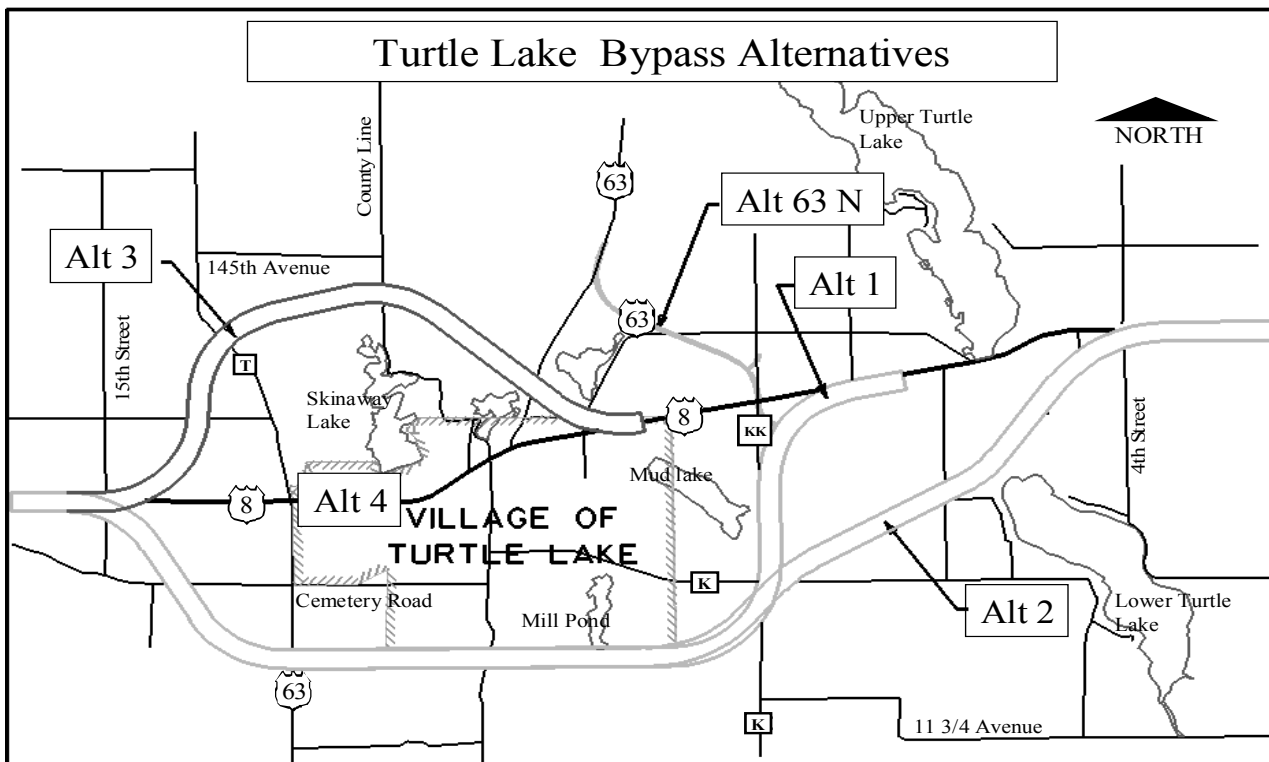
Location of Survey Station for Origin- Destination Survey in Barron.



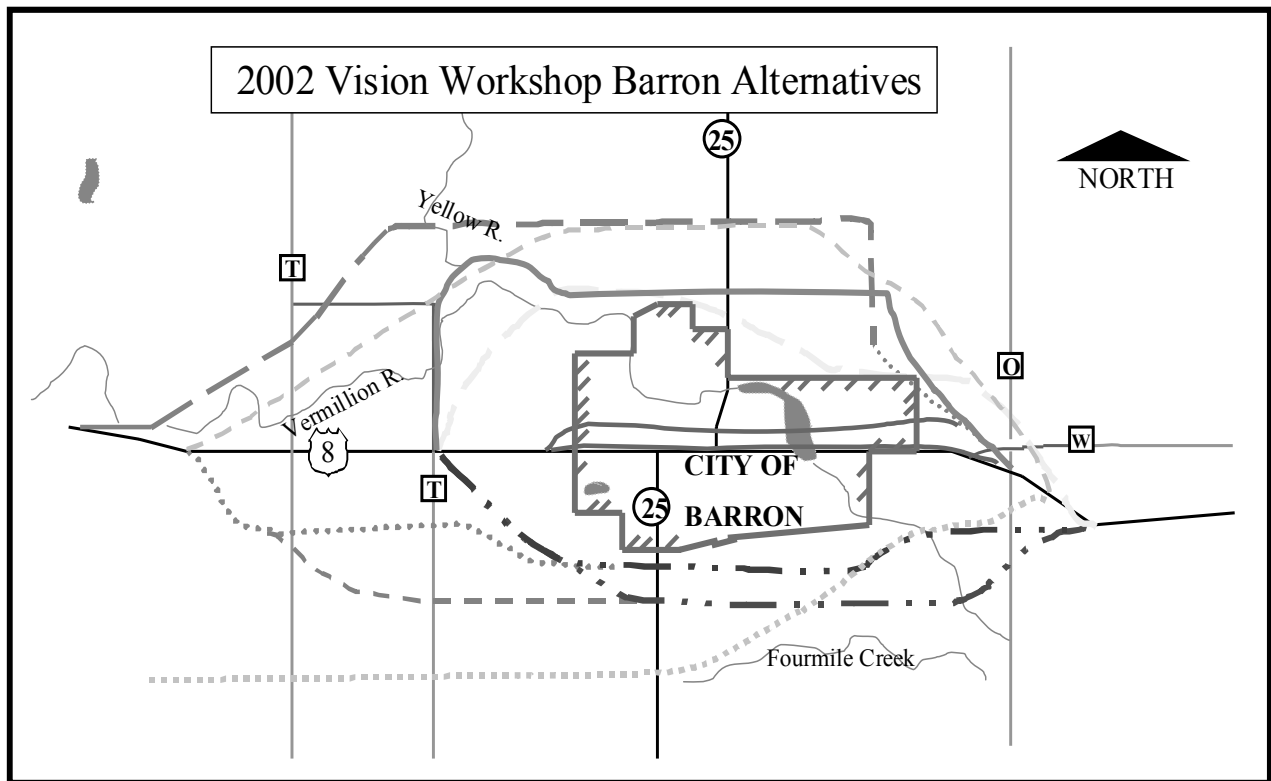
Location of Survey Station for Origin- Destination Survey in Turtle Lake.



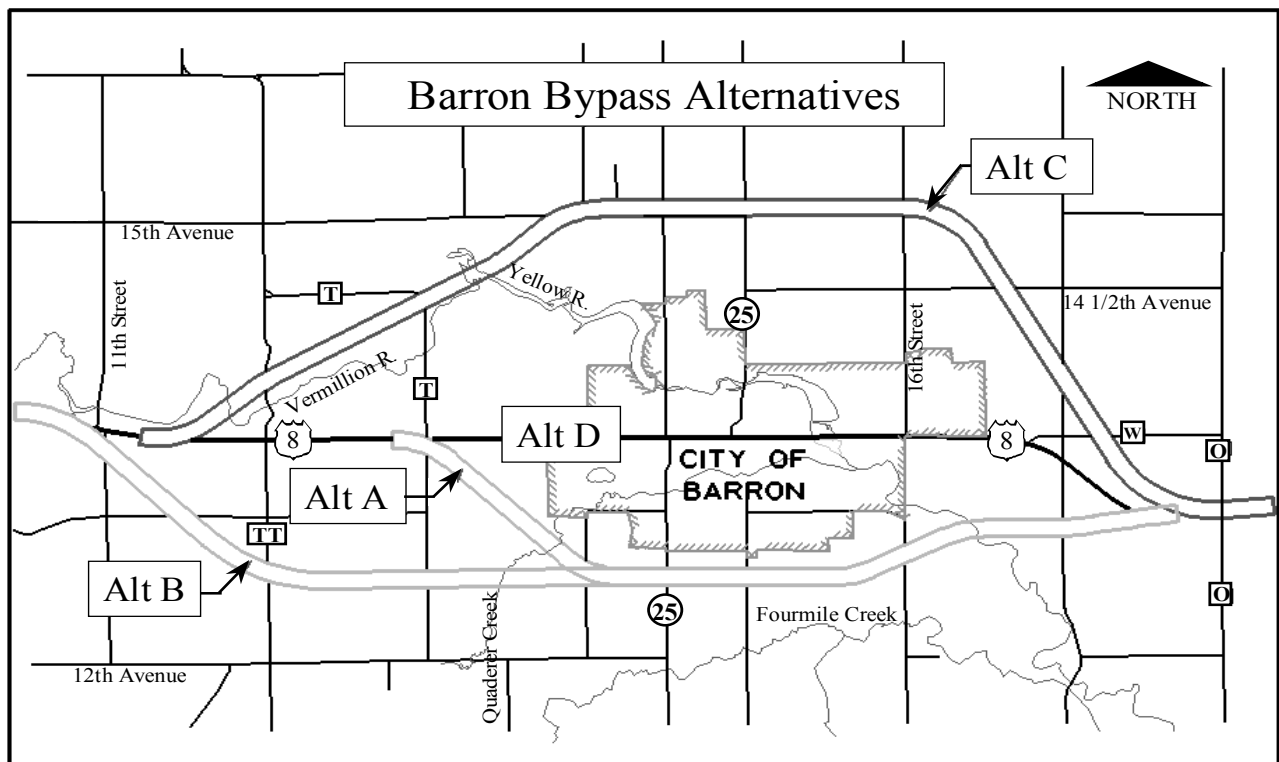
Citizens drew the possible routes for bypass alternatives around Turtle Lake.



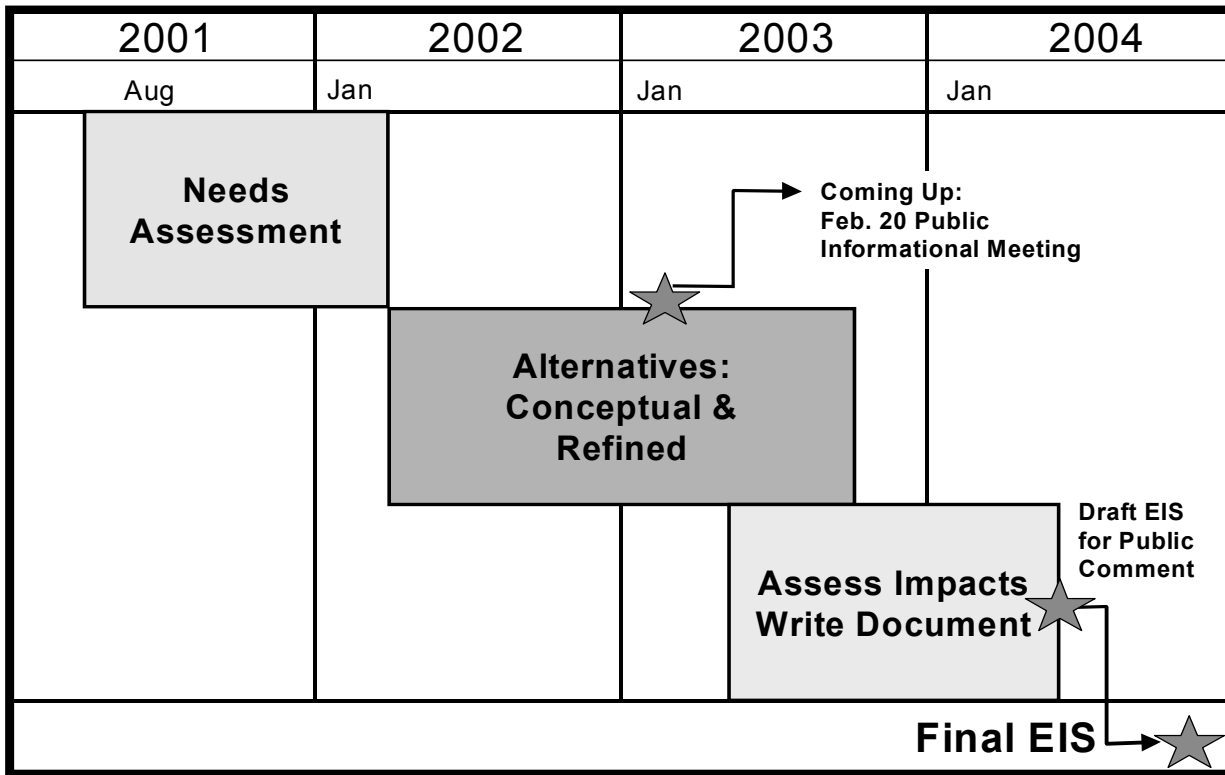
Conceptual Bypass Alternatives were developed using drawings from the Turtle Lake Vision Workshop.



Citizens worked together to draw routes to efficiently bypass Barron while keeping impacts to a minimum.



Several routes developed from the Barron Vision Workshop will be presented for comments at the public Information meeting on Feb 20.



US 8 EIS SCHEDULE

Inside:
US 8 WIS 35 (N) to US 53
EIS Newsletter

Strand Associates, Inc.
910 West Wingra Dr.
Madison, WI 53715



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PERMIT #1400